

In-Fur-Nation

Your Guide to the World of Furry Fandom

Volume 19, Number 4

All The News We Get, We Print!

Fall, 2008



< Image c. 2008 Dreamworks Animation >

"Don't look doll... This could get hairy!" – Skipper, leader of the Penguin Squad, from Dreamworks Animation's *Madagascar 2* – *Escape 2 Africa*.

Another fall season, another big (big!) election... and, most importantly, another sampling of Furry News that we're bringing you...

The News

These days, we just cannot get enough of live-action talking animals. More proof? Disney's *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*, which was number one at the box-office for not just one, but two weekends in a row. Not bad for "a children's movie". As of this writing, the film is well on its way to joining The Century Club by earning over \$100 million in domestic box office...

... UNTIL, along came the new film known as *Madagascar 2: Escape to Africa* from Dreamworks Animation. Assembled by the same folks who brought us the first *Madagascar* in 2005, the new films follow the adventures of our zoo-bred heroes as they try to return to New York – in King Julian the lemur's airplane, piloted by the penguins! Needless to say, this does not work out, and our heroes find themselves crash-landing in Africa... right in the middle of a game preserve that has a very special meaning for Alex the lion. The Dreamworks CGI film was also number one at the box office its first weekend, and as of this writing looks on track to make about as much as the first film did.

Things are not quite so easy for Bolt, Disney animation's new CGI/3D animated film. A lot is riding on this film, as it is the first film to be completed by the studio after Pixar's John Lasseter took over – and, in the process, took Chris Sander's film *American Dog* away from him to make this movie instead. Unfortunately, the new film (directed by Byron Howard and Chris Williams) found out the hard way that it just doesn't do to come between young girls and sexy, swooning vampires – even if you have Milley

Cyrus (Hannah Montana) in your cast! Bolt lost out on its opening weekend box office to *Twilight*, but since then it has been showing better legs. The story, of course, concerns an albino German shepherd named Bolt (John Travolta), who's the star of a hit TV action-adventure series along with his "person", Penny (Cyrus). He's a "method" acting dog – which is to say, he's been raised to believe the world of his TV show is real, right down to his own super-powers. When he's accidentally shipped across country, he has to struggle back home with the reluctant help of a street-wise cat named Mittens (Susie Essman) and the ecstatic help of a gung-ho hamster named Rhino (Mark Walton, a Disney story artist). Disney's hitting the stores with loads of Bolt merchandise for the Christmas season, and reports are out that various plushie toys from the film are selling like mad. And of course, Chronicle Books has released *The Art of Bolt* in hardcover (edited by Mark Cotta Vaz). It features numerous pre-production drawings from the film, including some original designs by Chris Sanders.



< Image c. 2008 Walt Disney Animation >

This Christmas (or rather, December 19th), Universal Pictures brings us the big-screen CGI adaptation of Kate DiCamillo's award-winning book, *The Tale of Despereaux*. The story actually follows the adventures of two little outcasts: Despereaux, a mouse who doesn't fit the cowardly cliché his people are known for, and Roscuro, a good-hearted rat who wishes to escape the shadowy world of his kind. It's directed by Sam Fell (who previously directed *Flushed Away* for Aardman Animations) and Robert Stevenhagen. The film boasts quite a roster of well-known stars as voice actors, including Matthew Broderick, Robbie Coltrane, Dustin Hoffman, Richard Jenkins, Kevin Kline, Frank Langella, William H. Macy, James Nesbitt, Tracey Ullman, Sigourney Weaver, Christopher Lloyd, Stanley Tucci, and Emma Watson.

This in from *The Hollywood Reporter*: "Fourteen films have been submitted to the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in hopes of securing one of the three nominations available in the best animated feature category. The contenders are *Bolt*, *Delgo*, *Dragon Hunters*, *Fly Me to the Moon*, *Igor*, *Kung Fu Panda*, *Madagascar: Escape 2 Africa*, *\$9.99*, *The Sky Crawlers*, *Sword of the Stranger*, *The Tale of Despereaux*, *Waltz With Bashir*, *WALL-E*, and *Dr. Seuss'*

Horton Hears a Who! Because there are at least eight but fewer than 16 submissions, a maximum of three movies can share the spotlight when Oscar nominations in all categories are announced January 22nd.

And this, from *Variety*: **Linda Woolverton** (*The Lion King*) has been tapped for a lifetime achievement award by the Writers Guild of America West's animation writers' caucus. Woolverton broke into the business as a development exec at CBS and began penning teleplays for animated TV shows such as *The Berenstain Bears*. She was then hired to pen the screenplay for [Disney's] *Beauty and the Beast*, followed by *The Lion King*, co-written with **Irene Mecchi** and **Jonathan Roberts**. She also adapted *Beauty and the Beast* for Broadway and co-wrote the book for **Elton John** and **Tim Rice's** musical *Aida*.

The rumor is confirmed! This was found at www.comingsoon.net: "Nickelodeon and DreamWorks Animation SKG, Inc. today announced plans to join forces on a new, 26-episode, CG animated comedy series tentatively titled *The Penguins of Madagascar*, based on the beloved penguin brothers in DreamWorks Animation's hit feature film, *Madagascar* (\$532 million worldwide gross) and its sequel, *Madagascar: The Crate Escape*. The series, which tells the story of a group of penguins who believes it leads an elite strike force from its Central Park Zoo headquarters, will be produced at the Nickelodeon Animation Studio in Burbank, California and is scheduled to premiere on Nick in early 2009. The series will feature the all-new adventures of Skipper, Kowalski, Rico and Private, four penguins who rule the roost at their Central Park Zoo home. While the brothers have their flippers full keeping their multi-species zoo neighborhood happy, at times their secret missions beckon them to venture out onto the busy streets of New York City. Just as the team thinks it has its urban acreage under control, a new neighbor moves in next door: Julien, King of the Lemurs, a party animal with an entourage and an overactive ego. Much to the penguins' exasperation, King Julien and his friends are there to stay, proving once again that opposites do not attract."

And this, from www.rottentomatoes.com: "The movie site **CHUD.com** has been following rumors that 20th Century Fox was looking to make a *Planet of the Apes* prequel for a while now, and this week, that project became very prominent, starting with a comment by Fox honcho **Tom Rothman** that they were indeed working on what he called a *Conquest of the Planet of the Apes* remake. Soon after, CHUD revealed that the current writer and expected director of the project is **Scott Frank** (screenwriter for *Out of Sight*, co-writer of *Minority Report*), who made his directorial debut in 2007 with *The Lookout*. A clarification came to CHUD the next day that the project, which was formerly known as *Genesis: Apes* is now known as simply *Caesar* (despite the confusion with a Roman movie that title creates). Rather than the full-blown "ape revolution" story that *Conquest* was, Frank's *Caesar* would be a smaller movie about a single chimpanzee (who isn't as tall as a man as the original movies showed them) whose intelligence is increased through experimentation."

Videos and DVDs

Hey There, It's Yogi Bear!, created in 1964, was the first feature film appearance of the picnic-basket swiping bear

from Jellystone Park (and, of course, from Hanna-Barbera). Now it's finally being released on DVD from Warner Home Video. Yogi's forced to leave his life of picnic thievery when the love of his life, Cindy Bear, is kidnapped by an evil circus ringmaster.

Comics

What is it? It's *Savage*, a new full-color four-issue mini-series from Shadowline (an imprint of Image Comics). Here's how they describe it: "An epic battle between vicious werewolves and the legendary Bigfoot. And that's just the beginning". Really. It's brought to you by **Jeff Frank**, **Steve Niles**, **Dan Wickline**, and **Mike Mayhew**.

Speaking of Bigfoot, how's this for a title: *Yeti vs. Vampire*. Yowza! It's a new full-color series from Antarctic Press, brought to us by **Miles Gunter** and **Kelsey Shannon**. Check it out: "Brain-eating terrorist monks; psycho werewolf pupals; severed, screaming heads on fire; point-blank napalm strikes... and that's just the first 12 pages!" [from *Previews*]

This fall, Antarctic is proud to host a special event: *Issue #100 of Gold Digger* by **Fred Perry**. It's been 17 years for Gina Diggers and her friends - many of them furies and other non-humans - and over all that time, this world-famous comic has been scripted, penciled, inked, and colored by one man! Now you can join the celebration, for 48 pages of full-color adventure as Gina comes face-to-face with her destiny!

Another porkish parody from **Dentibu?** Ready or not, here comes *Star Porks*, a new one-shot in black & white. Our furry hero, Zannabluke Skyporker, is out to get his money back after a bad purchase - but, along the way, he will accidentally free the galaxy from an evil empire!

New from Oni Press comes *Salt Water Taffy: The Seaside Adventures of Jack and Benny*, written and illustrated by **Matthew Loux**. When two young brothers spend a summer near a secluded bay with their parents, they expect to have a boring summer. Instead they come face to face with one magical adventure after another, finding such creatures as talking lobsters and a giant, kleptomaniac eagle with an obsession for fancy hats! This black & white adventure comic, geared towards younger readers, is presented in digest format.

In 1998, **Neil Gaiman** released *Sandman: The Dream Hunters*, a prose novella that dovetailed from his groundbreaking *Sandman* comic book series. Now, ten years later, Vertigo Comics and **P. Craig Russell** have teamed up to visualize **Gaiman's** creation as a 4-issue full-color comic book miniseries. The story tells of a humble young Japanese monk and a magical, shape-shifting fox - who find themselves romantically drawn together. As their love blossoms, the fox learns of a plot by a group of demons to steal the soul of the man she loves...

Big news for fans of the Sci Fi Channel TV series *Farscape*: Boom! Studios is releasing a brand-new *Farscape* full-color comic book series, written by none other than series creator **Rockne S. O'Bannon** (assisted ably by **Keith DeCandido** and **Tommy Patterson**). The series takes off right where the Sci Fi Channel movie *The Peacekeeper Wars* ended - in this case, with John Crichton and his crew of alien friends

(and lovers) heading home with Rigel the deposed ruler to his majesty's home planet. Word is out that the storyline in this new comic series will line up with the new series of *Farscape* "websisodes" that the Sci Fi Channel is promising for its web site.

Pirat Tales: The Legend of the Cat o' Nine Tails is a new full-color adventure series from IDW Publishing. It's written by **Dan Taylor**, with art by **Orlando Baez**. This is from their web site: "The infamous Captain Blacktail and his crew of swashbuckling rats set sail upon the high seas in search of a treasure equal to the ransom of kings upon kings. A young mouse known as Pip will find his life forever changed as he journeys to uncharted waters on an adventure with Captain Blacktail and the rat crew of the Vile Vermin".

Word has slipped out that **Dan Flahive** is re-starting his famous black & white furry comic *Space Wolf* – this time, as an on-line comic that will have a home at Deviant Art! For those unfamiliar – and it has been a long time! – *Space Wolf* tells the story of a war in outer space between the Canisii (anthro wolves, coyotes, and foxes) and the Ariesii (anthro sheep) as seen through the eyes of one brave lupine space commander. Dan has said he expects the comic to start appearing in early 2009 – maybe as early as January. To find out more, visit Dan's site at <http://danflahive.deviantart.com>.



< Image c. 2008 by Dan Flahive >

Books and Trade Paperbacks

In time for the release of the CGI animated film this winter [see above] Candlewick Press is releasing *The Tale of Despereaux: The Graphic Novel* in soft-cover and hardcover, by **Matt Smith** and **David Tilton**. Illustrated in full color, it features new artwork inspired by the film.

And speaking of "just in time"... Disney Editions has released *Disney Dogs* (edited by **Tamara Khalaf**), an illustrated celebration of Disney animated canines from Pluto up through (what else?) Disney's latest, *Bolt*. Two other

Disney-related books of interest to furry fans are *Walt Disney Animation Studios: The Archive Series – Story and Working with Walt: Interviews with Disney Artists*. *Story* (in hardcover) is the first book in a planned series showcasing production art from the Disney Animation Studios. This one featuring, of course, the Story department, with art by such Disney legends and luminaries as **Bill Peet**, **Don DaGradi**, **Joe Rinaldi**, **Roy Williams**, **Uw Iwerks**, **Burny Mattson**, and **Vance Gerry**, from projects as far back as *Steamboat Willie* up through *101 Dalmatians*. *Working with Walt* (in soft-cover) features interviews with voice actors, animators, and production artists who knew Walt Disney well through the heyday of his animation studio. And when you're done with those (!) check out *The Alchemy of Animation* by legendary producer **Don Hahn** (*The Lion King*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Emperor's New Groove*). Published by Disney Editions, it's a step-by-step guide to creating an animated film using all of the latest technology.

Oh look! One MORE Disney book, even! (Merry Christmas!) *Hippo in a Tutu: Dancing in Disney Animation* (don't you love that title?) by **Mindy Aloff** takes a look at well-known dance sequences in various Disney animated films and shorts – starting, of course, with the famous *Dance of the Hours* sequence from the original *Fantasia*. The book takes a look at cartoon dancing both from the viewpoints of animation and choreography. It's available in hardcover from Disney Editions.

For other animation fans (other than Disney that is!) there's *Stepping into the Picture: Cartoon Designer Maurice Nobel* by **Robert J. McKinnon** (in soft-cover, from University Press of Mississippi). **Maurice Nobel** was a background designer and production artist, whose work stretched all the way back to *Snow White* and the *Seven Dwarves*. He'd become most famous, however, for his long and productive career with director **Chuck Jones**, creating such classics as *What's Opera, Doc?*, *Duck Dodgers* in the 24-1/2th Century, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*. This book tells the story of an amazing animation pioneer whose work stretched over seven decades.

The master, **Ray Harryhausen**, has written a book (with the help of **Tony Dalton**): *A Century of Stop-Motion Animation*, published in hardcover by Watson-Guptill. From the earliest crude models, through the original *King Kong*, up to the modern visions of **Nick Park**, **Henry Selick**, and **Tim Burton**, it takes a loving look at this difficult art form through the years – including, of course, a detailed look at the works of **Harryhausen** himself.

Llyn Hunter's chibi illustrations of fantastic creatures have been compiled by Bobcat Publications into *A Little Book of Magical Beings* (in hardcover). Each entry (gryphon, dragon, hobgoblin, etc) features poetry and illustrations in Hunter's whimsical, charming style.

Meanwhile, artists who want to draw some fantastic creatures themselves might want to check out *Dragons in Watercolour* by **Paul Bryn Davies** (in hardcover, from Search Press). It presents the reader with simple, step-by-step watercolor painting techniques for creating dragons both fearsome and loveable. Taking things back a step, *How to Draw Dragons* (also by **Davies**, from the same publisher) teaches the fine art of rendering fantastic dragons in pencil and ink. More dragons, more artists: **John Howe** is world famous as one of the primary conceptual designers of the *Lord of the Rings* movie trilogy. Now he's written *Forging*

Dragons (published by Impact, in soft-cover), covering 30 years of dragon illustration – including his inspirations, original sketches, and coloring steps. For the more toon-oriented, there's *Cartoonimals* by **Harry Hamernik** (again from Impact, and again in soft-cover). It covers many cartooning techniques in an easy step-by-step manner. And of course, well-known animator **Eric Goldberg** (*Aladdin*, *Fantasia 2000*) has created the *Character Animation Crash Course* (in soft-cover from Silman-James Press). It includes not only character design and animation how-to lessons, but also a DVD of clips from various animated films to illustrate each lesson.

Outland and Bloom County creator **Berkeley Breathed** now brings us *Pete & Pickles*, a new hardcover illustrated children's book (published by Philomel). Pete is a perfectly practical pig, enjoying his predictable life – that is until Pickles, an escaped circus elephant, comes stampeding into his life! Pickles is larger than life and overflowing with imagination, and she may just teach Pete that the simple life is over-rated... if he survives! Meanwhile, another well-known comic book artist lends his talents to a new children's book. **Jim Valentino** illustrates *Bruce, the Little Blue Spruce* by **Kristen K. Simon**, published by Shadowline/Image. Bruce is a little spruce tree who wants to be in someone's living room for Christmas... but who wants to have a *blue* Christmas tree? This one-shot full color comic book celebrates the wonder of being different.

Super Real Graphics presents a brand new full-color "graphic novella" by **Grant Gould** (the artist behind *Star Wars: Clone Wars*) called *The Wolves of Odin*. The Old Norse god, seeing the spread of Christianity throughout his realm and the weakening of his powers, unleashes a trio of berserkers with the power to transform themselves into wolves. Thor, the son of Odin, takes it upon himself to defend the people of the Earth from this threat. It's Vikings vs. werewolves!

Gregory Maguire, the man who gave the world *Wicked* (first the novel, then the Broadway smash, and soon the motion picture!), now returns to his re-imagined Oz with *A Lion Among Men* (in hardcover, from William Morrow Publishers). No prizes for guessing: It tells the story of the Cowardly Lion, known by name as Brrr, both before and after his adventures with Dorothy. With war looming on the horizon, Brrr might need to summon all of the courage that he's never had to save not only his forest, but all of Oz.

This Christmas season, Gemstone Publishing is celebrating the release of *Walt Disney's Comics & Stories* issue #700 (!) with a special 80-page full-cover collection. It features both new and classic adventures of Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, and even the Big Bad Wolf – teamed up with Donald!

In January 2009, look for the new *Tiger! Tiger! Tiger!* graphic novel by award-winning Pixar artist **Scott Morse** (published by Adhouse Books, in hardcover). Morse's popular tiger from his comic strip *Southpaw* is reborn in these graphic stories, allowing the author and artist to explore questions of life, art, work, play, and fatherhood.

Personalities:

The inimitable **2 the Ranting Gryphon** has a new job he's given himself now: A "reporter at large" for Fur Affinity News at the well-known Fur Affinity web site. Periodically,

the famous furry comedian will be presenting audio commentary on some of the subjects, controversies, and other matters that people are talking about on Fur Affinity. In addition, he'll be presenting his own personal "awards" to art and presentations that catch his avian eye – including things as diverse as "The Cutest Award" and "The WTF Award". The first "issue" of Fur Affinity News can be viewed at www.furaffinity.net/view/1754696.

Obituaries:

It's not a furry thing per se, but it's something every fan of movies should know about: **Don LaFontaine**, world famous as the voice on literally thousand of movie and TV trailers, passed away this last September. Known to some as "Thunder Throat" and to others as "The Voice of God", LaFontaine's style was most closely associated with action/adventure and horror movie trailers... but he also loaned his deep, sonorous voice to thousands of TV commercials over the years. Not only did he make famous the phrase "In a world..." in movie trailers, but he was also instrumental in creating interest in the *Terminator* movies back before everyone knew that **Arnold Schwarzenegger** was a safe bet. As the *Washington Post* noted in their obituary: "In a world without Don LaFontaine, movies just won't be as much fun".

"Whoa, hold on to your tacos!" – Papi, chihuahua, from Walt Disney Pictures' *Beverly Hills Chihuahua*.

Furry Stuff has *Confurence Stuff*! The original Confurence General Store (for Confurances 0 – 10) has moved to the new Furry Stuff web portal. Check them out at www.furystuff.com to find out more – soon, pictures of what's available will be up on-line. Three of the popular Confurence T-Shirt designs are still available for a limited time: "Furries in Force" (black on honey-color) by **Eric Schwartz** from CF7, "Furries in Love" (black and pink on grey) by **Rachael Cawley** from CF9, and "Sydney's World" (Sydney on a colored globe on green) by **Ken Sample** from CF10. Plus, a very few of **Mitch Beiro's** colorful "Furries in Space" T-shirts remain (write for sizes available). They also still offer the *Confurence Seven Highlights Video*, as well as the *Confurence Eight – Music and Mirth* and *Confurence Nine – Furries in Love* highlights videos too! Not to mention many cool prints and extra Souvenir Books from past Confurances! To find a complete list, visit the Furry Stuff web site, or send them an SASE at: Furry Stuff, P.O. Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92842-1958.

Help us keep up with you! So, we hear you say, how do I keep up my *Subscription to In-Fur-Nation*? We're glad you asked! A subscription to *In-Fur-Nation* will bring you even *more* of what furry fans are looking for around the globe. Find out what to look for, and where to go! It's now brought right to your doorstep (or e-mail box) **four** times a year (winter, spring, summer, and fall), and still for just a whopping **\$5.00** for a year's subscription. That's right, for a year. Just send a check made out to "Furry Stuff" (and note it's for *In-Fur-Nation*), or heck, just send a \$5.00 bill in a darkened envelope. (Trust us, it's an old tradition in the 'zine community. It works). To subscribe, to find out more info, or to send us notes for our Furry News, write us at: In-Fur-Nation, P.O. Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92842-1958.

A Note to the staff members of our many Furry Conventions: Hey! We wanna help you get the word out!

Having a cool-looking web site is a neat thing, but remember: There are still a significant number of fans out there (furry and otherwise) who don't use the World Wide Web, or who don't use it to its full potential. For them, there's this cool old thing folks on the Internet call *Snail Mail*. That's where we come in! Send us information, and let us help you get the word out to over 1,000 furry fans, artists, dealers, and publishers in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Japan... Look below for our reasonable ad rates, and don't forget... send us text blurbs and you get in for free!

A Request to Our Readers: If you got a favorite comic or book store that carries your favorite furry titles, or that you wish would carry more? Give us their address! We'll send them a copy of In-Fur-Nation each quarter, and keep them abreast of the kind of comics and media that you would like to see on their shelves! Remember, they can't order it if they don't know it's out there! As an alternate: Know of any good comic zines or web sites that might be looking to trade issues?

Guess what? In-Fur-Nation is looking for Field Reporters! As an on-going feature, we're going to present profiles of furry creators and furry-oriented companies that are helping to promote products and media of interest to furry animal fans all over. So, like to help out? Know a comic book creator, animator, publisher, or other such person in the field who'd like to discuss what furries mean to them, or to the world? Talk to them, write down what they say... then give us a write-up, about 300-500 words, and we'll include it as a blurb in an upcoming INE, and give you credit for it. [We do maintain the right to edit for clarity and length, mind you.] And hey, we're looking for **furry convention reviews and anecdotes** too! Send hard copies to the Furry Stuff address above, or, you can e-mail your submission to **Rod O'Riley** at mink@firstlight.net.

Advertising in In-Fur-Nation: For those who've been asking, ads in In-Fur-Nation come in these sizes: 1/8-page "business card" size for \$5.00 per issue, and 1/4-page size (4 1/2" tall by 3 1/4" wide) for \$10.00 per issue. Full-page inclusions can also be arranged for \$50.00 an issue. Check should be made out to Furry Stuff. Send camera-ready art and text to P.O. Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1958, or send email to mink@firstlight.net.

(Many thanks to all the people who helped provide information for this issue both by mail and via Internet! Invaluable help was also received from the web masters of the various furry conventions out there, and from *Previews* magalog and *Animation* magazine.)

More Furry Conventions All Around!

Further Confusion 2009 - Surfin' Safari

January 22nd - 26th, 2009, one more time at the Doubletree Hotel in San Jose, California, dudes and dudettes! Celebrating their 10th anniversary, the largest furry fandom convention west of the Rockies celebrates a furry weekend at the beach - catching some rays, catching some waves, and catching some eyes!

From the web site at www.furtherconfusion.org: "Further Confusion is one of the largest international conventions celebrating anthropomorphics in all its guises. With an attendance of over 2,400 and growing, it is one of the premiere events of its kind. Further Confusion includes

charitable benefits, educational seminars, art shows, panels and general social activities. It was the first event sponsored by Anthropomorphic Arts and Education Inc. and continues to be its largest."

FC 2009 welcomes three special Guests of Honor: **Jeff Pidgeon** has worked as a storyboard artist, animator and character designer in television and feature films for over twenty years (*Mighty Mouse: The New Adventures*, *Tiny Toon Adventures*, *Taz-Mania*, *The Simpsons*). He is also an avid toy collector, and the creator of the Happy Beaver line of vinyl toys. His wife, **Anita Coulter**, has been an accomplished writer and puppeteer for fifteen years. And **Clare Bell** is the author of the *Ratha* series of books about intelligent Miocene felines. Her latest book in that series was released this past April, and her original novel (*Ratha's Creature*) was turned into an animated episode on *CBS Storybreak*.

Memberships at FC2009 start at **\$45.00** for full membership (five days!), and goes up to **\$100.00** for a Sponsorship and **\$200.00** for a patron membership (check out the web site for more details). Mail-in registration will only be accepted until December 30, 2008, so get yours in soon. Information on Dealer Tables, Artists Alley (The Furry Marketplace), and on-line registration can be found on the web site too. Or, you can write them at: Further Confusion Registration, 105 Serra Way PMB 236, Milpitas, CA 95035.

Rooms at both the Doubletree Hotel (just a stone's throw from the San Jose Int'l Airport) and the overflow hotel (the nearby Holiday Inn) have once again **SOLD OUT**. Visit the convention's web site to find a list of nearby hotels and motels that are available - don't worry, there are plenty.

Rusfurence

The next big furry convention in Russia will take place January 28th - February 1st, 2008, at the Holiday Hotel Rus, outside of Moscow. In the past, Rusfurence has welcomed more than 100 furry fen and fursuiters from the area and all over Russia, as well as Europe. Visit <http://rusfurence.ru/2008> to find out more. [An English translation site is also available.]

Furry Fiesta

The first Furry Fiesta comes to north Texas on February 20th - 22nd, 2009, at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Dallas. The Guests of Honor for this kick-off event include the well-known furry web-site creator known as **Nexus**, the artist **Tiffany Ross** (creator of the web comics *Akela*, *Shivae*, and *Alien Dice*), and the popular musical group known as **Sub Level 3**. A full weekend of concerts and dances is being planned, as well as the ever-popular discussion groups, workshops, fur-suit shows, and other events.

The Crown Plaza Hotel is located in North Dallas at 14315 Midway Road, Addison, TX 75011. The reservation number is (972) 246-6379 from 8am - 6pm weekdays. Reservations are also available online. Make sure to use the group code **FES** when you register with the hotel. Room rates are **\$79.00** per night for one or two in a room, and **\$89.00** per night for three or four.

Membership registration for the first Furry Fiesta will cost you just **\$35.00** until January 31, 2009, and **\$40.00** at

the door. Sponsor and Super-Sponsor memberships are also available. Visit the Furry Fiesta web site at www.furryfiesta.org to find out more, or you can write to them at: Furry Fiesta, P.O. Box 803543, Dallas, TX 75380.

Furry Weekend Atlanta

The Deep South's Anthropomorphic Exposition celebrates its 6th year of furry festivities! Next year, FWA 2009 takes place March 19th thru 22nd in Atlanta, Georgia, USA - This time, celebrating the theme of *Safari*. FWA 2009 welcomes two great guests of honor: The musician known as **Hali of Firpine** (or, more commonly, as **Matthew Ebel**) and the prolific furry artist known as **Moonstalker**. Visit FWA's web site (www.furryweekend.com) to find out more about both of them.

Besides moving in time, FWA 2009 has moved in space! Their new home is the Hilton Atlanta Downtown, 255 Courtland Street, Atlanta, GA 30303. It features three times as much function space as FWA's previous location! The hotel's phone number for reservations is (404) 659-2000. The room rate is \$127.00 per night (for up to four in a room), but you must call Hilton Reservations and mention the Furry Weekend Atlanta to get that rate. Or, register through FWA's web site, and used the con-code FWA.

Memberships at FWA 2008 come in several levels, the most basic being an Attending Membership for \$35.00 - by mail, until March 6th, 2009. After that, attending memberships are \$40.00 at the door. Supporting (non-attending) Memberships are also available for \$15.00, and various levels of Sponsorship are available too. Check the FWA web site for more information, or to download a registration pdf file. Or, you can write to them at: Furry Weekend Atlanta, P.O. Box 1511, Madison, AL 35757.

Wild Nights

The first furry convention to be held in the state of Missouri is planned for April 23rd - 27th, 2009. Their web site (at <http://wildnights.org>) describes it this way: "Camping Out, Furry Style! Registration, Meals, and Lodging as low as \$40 total! The fandom has a new campout event! Wild Nights is a brand-new furry-themed event scheduled for late April of 2009. Held at Lake of the Ozarks State Park in Central Missouri, it features a mix of traditional furry convention activities as well as popular outdoor activities! Your registration includes not just the activities for the event, but also meals and lodging in one of the on-site cabins. So come out and join everyone for Wild Nights, the fandom's newest and greatest outdoor event!" Visit their web site to find out more about Registration and planned events.

Wild Nights is operated by the Missouri Exotic Species Arts Association, a member-run not-for-profit organization. This year our charity is Safari's Sanctuary, a not-for-profit all-volunteer zoo and animal rescue facility located in Broken Arrow, OK.

Furry Connection North

Once again it's time for Michigan's furry convention! This year's Furry Connection North will take place April 24th thru April 26th in Novi, Michigan, at the Detroit Novi Sheraton

Hotel. An interesting theme this year: Furrines in the Time of Prohibition. It's Furry Gangsters! It makes sense then that the Guest of Honor for 2009 is **Tracy J. Butler**, writer and artist for the popular on-line furry strip *Lackadaisy Cats* (www.lackadaisycats.com).

The Detroit Novi Sheraton Hotel is located at 21111 Haggerty Road, Novi, Michigan 48375. Call (248) 349-4000 for reservations. The room rate is \$82.00 per night for king or double-bed rooms. Call the hotel and mention "Furry Connection North" to get the special room rate.

Pre-Registration to FCN will close on March 20th, 2009. Available memberships include Attending for \$25.00, Sponsors for \$50.00, and Super-Sponsors for \$120.00. Want to find out more? Check out www.furryconnect.com.

Don't Forget - Coming Soon: The Ursa Major Awards for 2008!

More formally known as the Annual Anthropomorphic Literature and Arts Award, the Ursa Major Award is presented annually for excellence in the furry arts. It's intended as Anthropomorphic (a.k.a. Furry) Fandom's equivalent of the Hugo Award® (presented by the World Science Fiction Society), mystery fandom's Anthony Award, horror fandom's Bram Stoker Award, and so forth.

Anyone may nominate. **Nominations** for 2008 works will open in late January, 2009. Voting for the 2008 Ursa Major Award will take place in the spring of 2009. Please contact us if you wish to receive a ballot (see below). The Award will be presented at a furry convention (to be announced!) in late spring or early summer.

To be eligible, a work must have been released between January 1 and December 31 of 2008, and must include a non-human being given human attributes (anthropomorphic), which can be mental and/or physical (for example the intelligent rabbits in *Watership Down* for the former, and Bugs Bunny for the latter.) Simply including an animal character is not sufficient to qualify. Nominations are not limited to items included on the Recommended Anthropomorphics List, which are simply some people's recommendations. Any works first published during the year under consideration are eligible. The Ursa Major Award categories include Best Anthropomorphic: Motion Picture, Dramatic Short Work or Series, Novel, Short Fiction, Other Literary Work (such as short story collections or art portfolio books, etc.), Comic Book, Comic Strip (paper or on-line), Fanzine, Published Illustration, Game (FRP or video), and Miscellany (items that don't fit elsewhere, such as toys or models, etc.).

To find out more about the Ursa Major Awards for 2008, visit the web site (www.ursamajorawards.org) or send an SASE to: Ursa Major Award, c/o Rod O'Riley, P.O. Box 1958, Garden Grove, CA 92642-1958, U.S.A.

That's all for this time folks - and all that's left of 2008! We'll be making more changes to how things work at *In-Fur-Nation* in 2009, as well as souping up our web site at www.infurnation.com - joining the modern world, so to speak. So look for us in late January, 2009! See you then! And Thank You once again for voting! [Rod O'Riley, your humble ed-otter]

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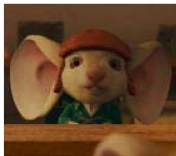
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